

GP Trainee Recruitment 2026

Guide to Applicants



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This document should be read in conjunction with The National Specialist Programme in General Practice Training prospectus.

Section 1: Application Process

Recruitment to general practice training in Ireland is a competitive process which is managed by the Irish College of GPs.

Prior to submitting an application applicants are required to review the Person Specification to ensure that they will meet all requirements.

Applicants must

- Hold a primary medical degree or equivalent medical qualification
- Be eligible for registration on the Trainee Specialist Division of the Irish Medical Council.
- Meet the HSE English Language Competency Requirements.
- Have completed a minimum of nine months of paid, full-time (or equivalent) postgraduate acute hospital-based clinical experience within the last three years, by July 2026. Clinical posts must be a minimum duration of 3 months each (the only exception to this is where they are part of a structured intern programme).
- Successfully undertake and achieve the required standard in both the:
 - Situational Judgement Test (SJT)
 - Clinical Problem-Solving Test (CPST)
- Demonstrate a range of competencies appropriate to the role of a GP trainee to the required standard at interview.
- Be fully competent and capable of performing the duties associated with participation in a GP Training Scheme.
- Be in a state of physical and mental health that indicates a reasonable prospect of rendering regular and efficient service in training posts.

Note: Trainees' physical and mental health must enable them to meet the expectations of the training position, appropriate to the stage of training. This includes consideration of personal, financial, or other stressors impacting wellbeing, as well as disability and illness.

Applicants must not:

- Be currently registered on the Irish College of General Practitioners (ICGP) IMG Rural GP Programme.
- Hold or be eligible to hold a Certificate of Specific Training/Acquired Rights in General Practice from the Irish Medical Council.
- Have exited a postgraduate training programme in any country before full completion without reviewing the Exit from Training Policy to confirm eligibility.

The 2026 GP trainee recruitment process will be in three stages:

Stage 1

Application A – Applicable to all applicants that wish to undertake the [Situational Judgement Test \(SJT\) and Clinical Problem Solving Test \(CPST\)](#)

Applicants will be required to provide relevant contact information, and consent to the Terms & Conditions of application and pay the non-refundable application fee of €100.

Deadline for completed applications is Monday, 13 October 2025 @10am.

Mandatory Pre-test check – all applicants are required to complete the pre-test check. This must be undertaken between Tuesday, 14 - Thursday, 16 October 2025.

Applicants that do not complete the mandatory pre-test will not be issued with a link to the live test and will be removed from the remainder of the process.

[Pre-Requisites for Online Test : Proctoring & Certification Support](#)

Stage 2

Application B – Applicable only to applicants that meet the minimum requirements in the SJT/CPST tests.

The application will be open from Friday, 07 November to Monday, 24 November @5pm.

At this stage of the process applicants will be required to provide evidence of:

- HSE English language competency requirements
- Eligibility for the trainee register of the Irish Medical Council
- Details of postgraduate, acute hospital-based, clinical experience

The College requires applicants to have completed a minimum of 9 months of paid clinical experience, within the 3 years prior to commencing training (July 2026).

Clinical posts must be a minimum duration of 3 months each (the only exception to this is where they are part of a structured intern programme).

Stage 3

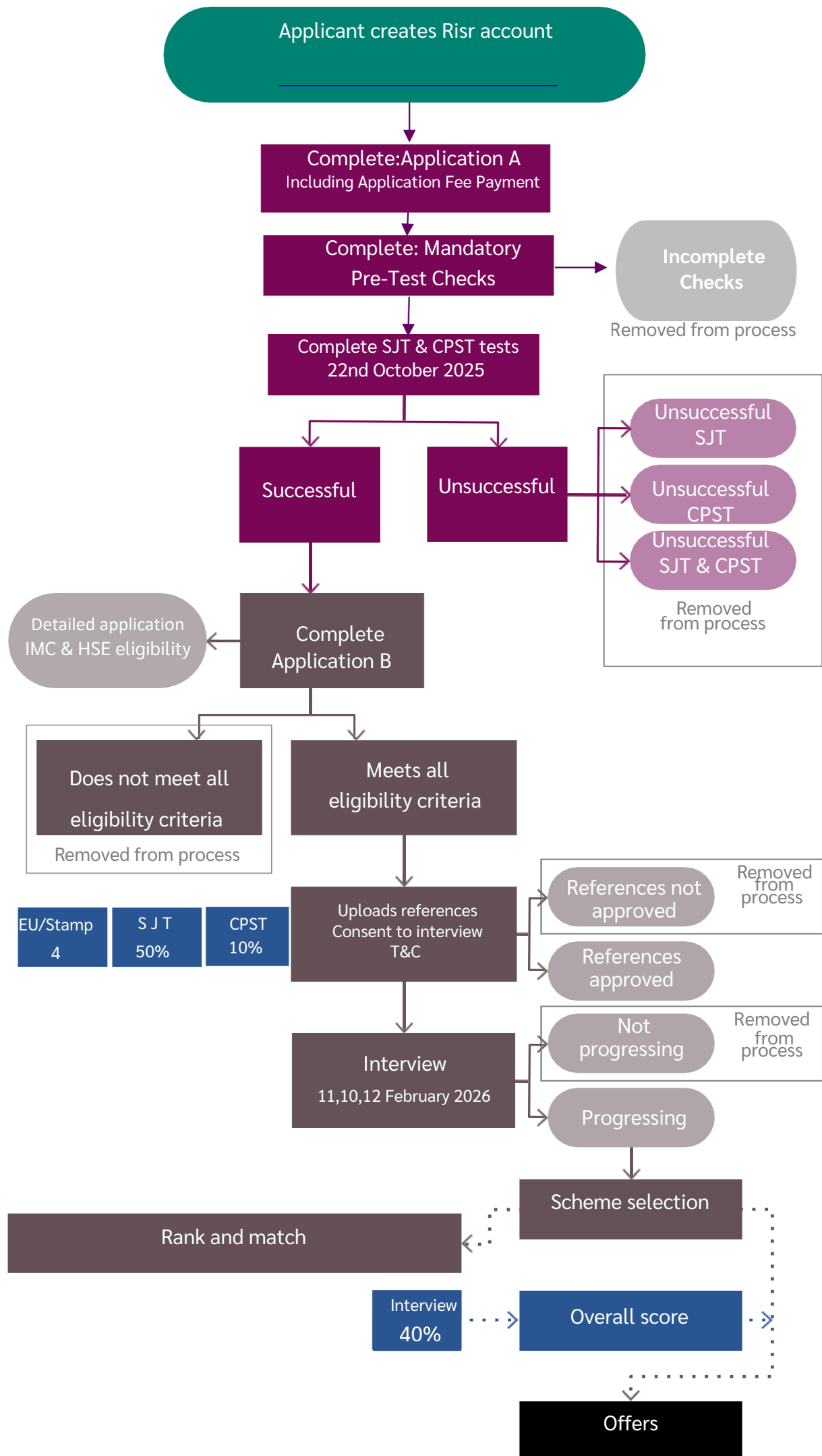
Applicants who provide the required evidence in stage 2 are invited to an online Interview, including Simulated Patients, on Tuesday 10, Wednesday 11, or Thursday 12, February 2026.

Applicants will be randomly allocated to an interview day/time.

Overall Score

Scores from the SJT/CPST and interview will be combined to give an overall candidate score. Offers of scheme places will be made in rank order of this overall score, taking into consideration the candidate's scheme preference(s) and [HSE policy on the allocation of training places](#).

GP Trainee Recruitment 2026



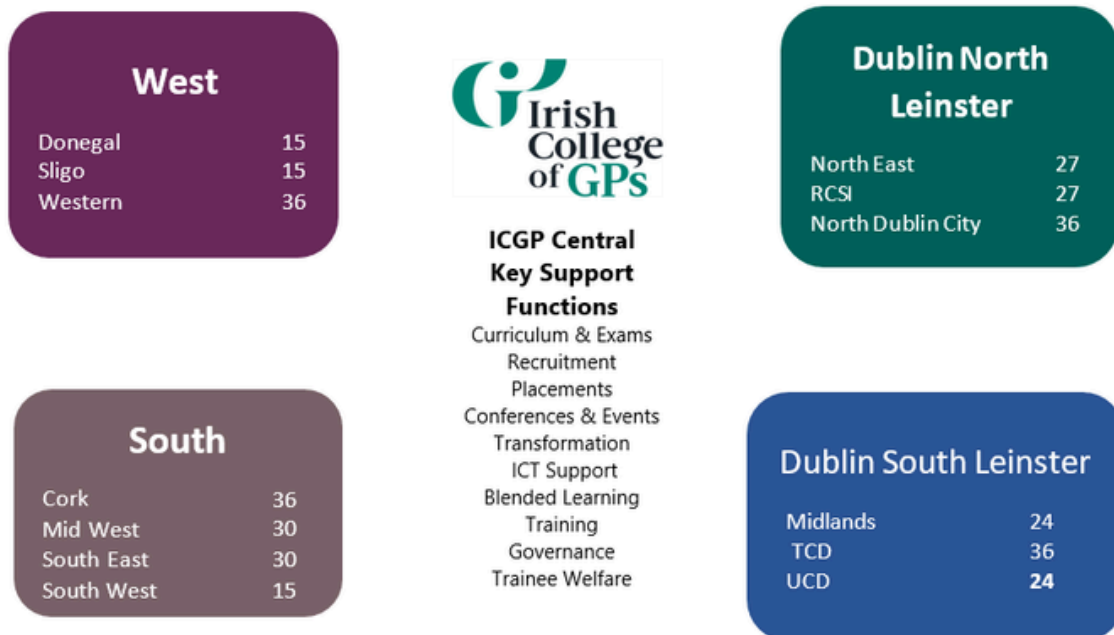
- There is no deferral of training. Offers made in 2026 are for commencement on Monday, 13 July 2026.
- Candidates are not permitted to exchange places/offers with other successful candidates.
- If a candidate rejects a training offer this does not impact on any future applications. If, however, a candidate accepts a training offer and withdraws without a valid reason, having signed the GP trainee agreement, they may be referred to the Irish Medical Council for unprofessional behaviour. This may also impact on the success of future applications.
- For further information on working as a doctor in Ireland click [here](#).

GP Training Intake

In 2025, 1,800 applications were received for 350 training places.

A breakdown of the region/scheme intake in 2025 is outlined below.

The intake per scheme for 2026 remains unchanged from 2025.



Section 2: Eligibility Criteria

Applicants that meet the required standard in the [SJT & CPST](#) tests are required to provide evidence of their eligibility for the trainee specialist register of the Irish Medical Council (IMC) and of HSE English language competency requirements.

It is the responsibility of the applicant to ensure that their documentation is up-to-date and meets the criteria below.

1. Eligibility for the Trainee Specialist Register (TSR)

The Medical Council (IMC) have advised that the following candidates (A-F) can be automatically considered eligible for the trainee specialist division:

Criteria	Required Supporting Documentation to support TSR
A. Doctors who have graduated from an Irish Medical School and have successfully <u>completed</u> their internship in Ireland.	Certificate of experience from IMC <u>or</u> a copy of previous IMC intern registration certificate.
B. Doctors who have graduated from an Irish Medical School and will complete their internship in Ireland by July 2026.	Certificate of registration from Medical Council indicating intern registration & Irish Medical Degree.
C. Doctors who are currently registered with the IMC in the General or Trainee Specialist Divisions.	Current IMC registration certificate.
D. Doctors who were previously registered with the IMC in the General or Trainee Specialist Divisions.	Previous IMC registration certificate.
E. Doctors who <u>have</u> confirmation of eligibility from the IMC for the General Register*	Email/letter from IMC confirming eligibility for the General register.
F. Doctors who have successfully completed their medical Qualification in one of the following EU countries – Austria, Belgium, Bulgaria, Croatia, Cyprus, Czech Republic, Estonia, Finland, France, Germany, Greece, Hungary, Iceland, Latvia, Netherlands, Romania, Spain, Switzerland or Slovak Republic.	Medical Degree from one of the listed EU Countries.

*Please note that the Irish Medical Council can no longer provide individual emails for eligibility to the Trainee Specialist Division.

HSE English language

Criteria (Exemptions for IELTS/OET)	Required Supporting Documentation
A. Registration with the IMC prior to 1st January 2015	IMC certificate of registration (any division of the register) - dated prior 1st January 2015
B. Completion of medical degree through English in Ireland, UK, Australia, Canada, New Zealand or USA.	Copy of Medical Degree from Ireland, UK, Australia, Canada, New Zealand or United States
C. Completion of Irish state leaving certificate <u>or</u> A Levels (UK) and completion of a Medical Degree through English.	Copy of Irish state leaving certificate <u>or</u> A Levels (UK) Copy of Medical Degree. Confirmation from university that the medical degree was taught/examined solely in English.
D. Currently or previously employed as medical doctor by the HSE, whereby IELTS/OET was completed upon entering service to HSE.	Copy of IELTS/OET submitted to HSE (this does not have to be dated within 2 years of application but is required to meet the minimum scoring as outlined below). Provision of current/previous HSE employment posts as MD on the application form.
Applicants that do not meet any of the above criteria are required to submit one of the following:	
E. IELTS Certificate–International English Language Testing System*	IELTS certificate , dated within 2 years of the application to gp training. Overall score of 7 & min of 6.5 in reading, writing, listening & speaking.
F. OET Certificate –Occupational English Test*	OET certificate , dated within 2 years of the application to GP training. Minimum grade of B & min. of B in reading, writing, listening & speaking.

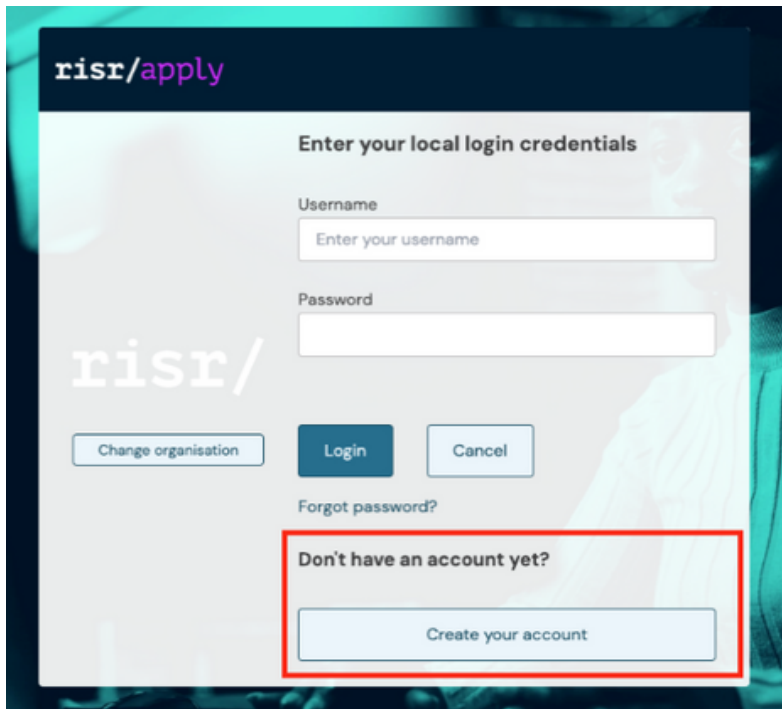
* IELTS (International English Language Testing System) certificate with an overall band score of 7.0 and a minimum score of 6.5 in each of the four domains – reading, writing, listening and speaking - on the academic test. The test must be undertaken no more than two years prior to the date of it being submitted at application stage.

Or

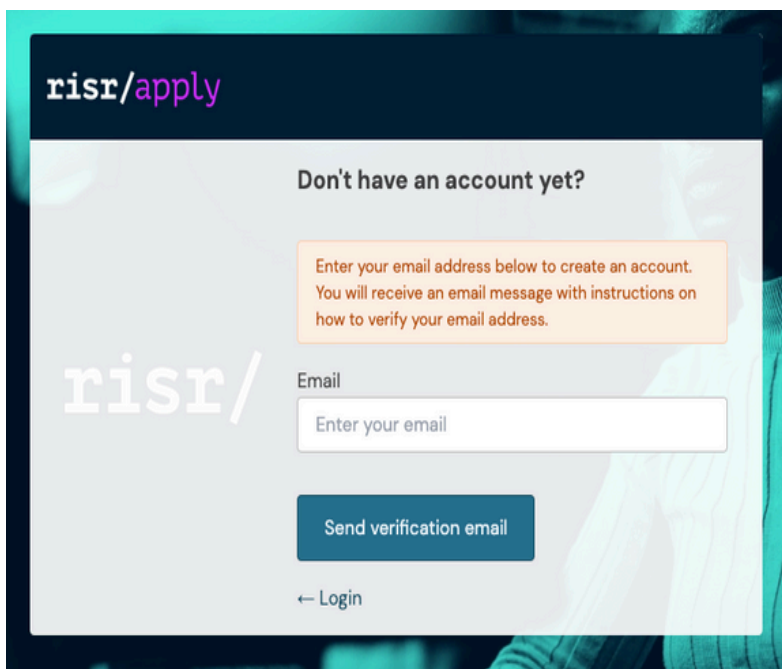
OET (Occupational English Test) certificate with an overall minimum grade of B and a minimum grade of B in Listening, Reading, Writing and Speaking. The test must be undertaken no more than two years prior to the date of it being submitted at application stage.

Section 3: Registration & Application Requirements

1. Create an account on Risr



Follow the create your account option is first asked to provide an email address. Please ensure you provide an email address that is checked regularly.



A unique code is sent to this email address for the user to enter into the verification screen. This step ensures the email address is valid and one to which the user has access.

Enter the code that is emailed to you.

Once the email address has been verified, the user is asked to choose and confirm a username and password. This password must adhere to the password security rules, outlined in the next screenshot.

How to return to my application after my account has been created?

1. Select – Login with local account
2. Enter Username*
3. Enter Password

**Your username is usually the start of your email address
e.g. janesmith2@gmail.com the username is janesmith2*

Application A - The following is required for part A:

Fields with * are mandatory

- I have read/understand the Terms & Conditions of application*.
- First Name*
- Last Name*
- Date of Birth*
- Address*
- E-mail*
- Contact Number*
- Gender* - male, female, non-binary/other, prefer not to say
- Nationality*
- Confirm Current Work Permission in Ireland* – Irish/EU/EEA/British Citizen -work permit not required, Stamp1, Stamp1G, Stamp4, I need a work permit

- Irish Medical Council Number
- Division of Irish Medical Council registered
- Overseas Medical Registration – if applicable
- Entry level to medical school (Graduate Entry or Undergraduate)
- I am a CAO/HEA graduate of Irish Medical School* (Yes/ No)
- *A CAO/HEA Graduate is defined as a trainee who was entitled to free fees in an Irish Medical
- School and who accessed the programme through the CAO process. Any student who was required to pay fees to access their degree is not considered a CAO/HEA Graduate.
- Current post* (Intern (Ireland), Intern (Other), SHO or Equivalent, Registrar, Consultant, FY1/FY2 (UK), General Practitioner, not currently working, Other (Free text))
- Current interns must insert their expected internship completion date: DD/MM/YYYY and Medical School (TCD, UCD, RCSI, UL, UCC, NUIG, QUB, UU, Other (free text))
- Country of Primary Medical Qualification (PMQ)*
- Based on medical grounds I will require additional time for the SJT & CPST test (Yes/ No) Applicants that indicate Yes must email supporting documentation from a registered medical specialist by Monday 13th October.

SJT/CPST Test Time Preference*

Applicants can select from the list below their preferred test commencement time.

Applicants are advised that it may not be possible to facilitate all requests.

In cases where there are more applicants than available slots they will be randomly allocated.

Block A: 7.15am UTC+1

Block B: 10.45am UTC+1

Block C: 14.14pmUTC+1

Block D: 17.45pm UTC+1

You will be asked to complete declarations as follows:

- I resigned from a medical specialist training programme for personal reasons (*)
- I resigned from medical specialist training prior to impending disciplinary or competency related action (*)
- I was removed from medical specialist training for competency issues (*)
- I was removed from medical specialist training for disciplinary issues (*)
- I was removed from medical specialist training for other issues (*)

**Applicants that indicate Yes to any of the above will be required to provide appropriate supporting documentation in part B of the application.*

- A non-refundable fee of €100 is required to complete the application.
- Applicants will receive a series of email confirmations from the system –
 - Receipt from Riscr confirming payment
 - Receipt from Stripe confirming payment
 - Confirmation of receipt of application

Application B

Applicants that are successful in the SJT & CPST will be invited to complete application B. The form will be open from Tuesday, 04 November.

This application requires more detailed information in relation to hospital experience, qualifications, recognition of prior learning, and the provision of appropriate supporting documentation.

The information requested is listed below. Fields with * are mandatory.

- Confirmation of Nationality*
- Confirmation of Work Permit – where applicable
- Eligibility Requirements of the Irish Medical Council (IMC) and Health Service Executive (HSE)*
 - IMC – [Eligibility for the trainee specialist register](#)
 - HSE – [English language competency](#)
- Undergraduate medical qualification*
- Hospital Experience - Applicants must include details (start date, end date, speciality, hospital site, supervising consultant) of their hospital/clinical experience, starting with current/most recent post.
- Postgraduate qualifications
- [Recognition of Prior Learning \(RPL\)](#)
- Declarations*

Section 4: Shortlisting Criteria

Shortlisting is based on applicants' performance on a Situational Judgement Test and Clinical Problem-Solving Test. Applicants must also provide details of a minimum level of postgraduate clinical hospital experience.

Hospital Experience

Applicants will be required to have completed a minimum of 9 months paid full time (or equivalent) postgraduate acute hospital-based clinical experience either as an intern or SHO at the time of starting GP training July 2026.

Clinical posts must be a minimum duration of 3 months each (the only exception to this is where they are part of a structured intern programme).

Situational Judgement Test (SJT) & Clinical Problem-Solving Test (CPST) System Requirements

[Pre-Requisites for Online Test : Proctoring & Certification Support](#)

Situational Judgement Test (SJT)

The SJT will consist of approximately 45 scenarios depicting situations which applicants would be likely to encounter in their work as a hospital doctor. The SJT will assess attributes such as professionalism, empathy, coping with pressure and integrity, and are a measure of pro-social behaviour. They will not measure clinical knowledge. Applicants will be asked to select from a range of options the most appropriate action to take in a given situation. Answer keys will follow two formats, either a ranking option, where the candidate lists in order of appropriateness, from 1 to 5, the options to take to address a situation, or multiple choice i.e. choose three appropriate options to take from a list of eight.

Scoring of the SJT assesses attitudes which best align to the work of a General Practitioner. As applicant numbers exceed the number of training places in any given year your score in the SJT will be used to shortlist those who progress to interview. SJT scores will also be carried forward to final ranking and assignment of training places.

Example of SJT Ranking Item

Rank 5 options in response to the situation, based on appropriateness of actions. Appropriate when the correct response is one discrete action.

You are an intern/SHO working in a hospital. Your supervisor gives you some feedback from an educational appraisal, which notes that you are good clinically. However, there have been reports that you do not always communicate clearly with patients and that the nurses have found you to be unclear with your instructions. You have not been made aware of this problem.	
Rank in order of appropriateness the following actions to take in response to this situation (1= Most appropriate; 5= Least appropriate).	
A	Check with your supervisor whether there has been a misunderstanding as you were not aware of any problems.
B	Arrange to meet with one of the senior nurses to ask her to explain the nurses' concerns in more detail.
C	Tell your supervisor that you will reflect on the feedback to see if you can identify ways to improve.
D	Ask the nursing staff to come to you directly if they continue to experience problems with your communication style so that you can address it promptly.
E	Apologise to your supervisor and the nursing staff.

Correct answer: CDBEA

Example of SJT Multiple Choice Item

Choose three appropriate options to take from a list of eight.

You are an intern/SHO working in a hospital, and you have recently undertaken several tasks that you are not familiar with. While doing so, you have made several minor mistakes, which you have admitted to and have been resolved. A fellow colleague intern/SHO, rudely tells you that you are not competent enough to be an intern/SHO.

Choose the THREE most appropriate actions to take in this situation.

A	Ask to leave the hospital so that you can go home.
B	Ask a senior colleague for advice on how you can improve your performance.
C	Ask a fellow intern/SHO for feedback on your general performance.
D	Reflect on whether your approach to new tasks can be adapted.
E	Ask your colleague why he is being rude.
F	Speak to your supervisor about the feedback that you have received.
G	Ask a member of staff to supervise you the next time you complete a new task.
H	Avoid completing new tasks in the future.

Correct answer: BDF

Clinical Problem-Solving Test (CPST)

The CPST will assess candidates' clinical knowledge and will take approximately 60 minutes. It must be completed online in a single session, following the SJT. An optional break will be possible between the SJT and CPST. The CPST will consist of approximately 50 single best answer (SBA) questions, describing common clinical presentations that a recently qualified doctor might encounter in the hospital setting.

The questions will explore candidates' ability to diagnose, investigate and manage these presentations. Applicants will be required to select the single most appropriate of five possible responses to each situation.

Please see below for a sample question.

A 20-year-old man presents to the emergency department with a one-hour history of rash, itch, swelling of lips and tongue and wheeze. Symptoms began within minutes of receiving a Covid booster vaccine. Systolic blood pressure is 90 mmHg. Pulse is 100 per minute and weak.	
The most important drug to administer in this situation is:	
A	Hydrocortisone
B	Chlorphenamine
C	Salbutamol
D	Atropine
E	Adrenaline

The purpose of the CPST is to ensure that the public is protected from practitioners not clinically competent to occupy training posts, whilst ensuring that the bar is not so high that it excludes those who do have the necessary knowledge and skills from being able to commence training. The standard of achievement expected will be that of a current intern.

The Irish College of GPs will use a criterion-referenced method of determining the pass mark for the CPST (Ebel method). Applicants who do not attain the required standard will not be shortlisted. CPST scores will contribute towards final ranking and assignment of training places.

Shortlisting scores are applicable only to the year in which the tests are taken and cannot be carried forward to subsequent years.

Section 5: Validation, Consent and Reference Process

Between Monday, 15 December – Monday, 05 January, applicants invited to interview will be required to complete an online validation and consent process in advance of interview.

This is a mandatory step in the process:

- Provide the name and contact details of two supervising consultants with whom you have worked with, within the last three years.
- Upload fully completed [BST references](#) from the named supervising consultants. Only references on the HSE BST reference template will be accepted.
- Consent to terms & conditions of the online interview.
- Consent to declaration and where relevant upload additional documentation.

Section 6: Interviews

Online interviews will take place on Tuesday 11, Wednesday 12 & Thursday 13, February 2026.

Interviews will be in the format of independent simulation stations with a single marker at each station. The interview will be based on scenarios that you are likely to encounter in your current or recent posts

Allocation to interview panels

Candidates who complete the online validation, consent and provide two suitable references will be randomly allocated to an interview day/time/panel.

Interview day, time & interview link will be issued the week prior to interviews. On receipt of this the candidate will be asked to confirm attendance.

Interview Content

The core domains of competency for general practice will be assessed at interview.

Core Domains of Competency for General Practice

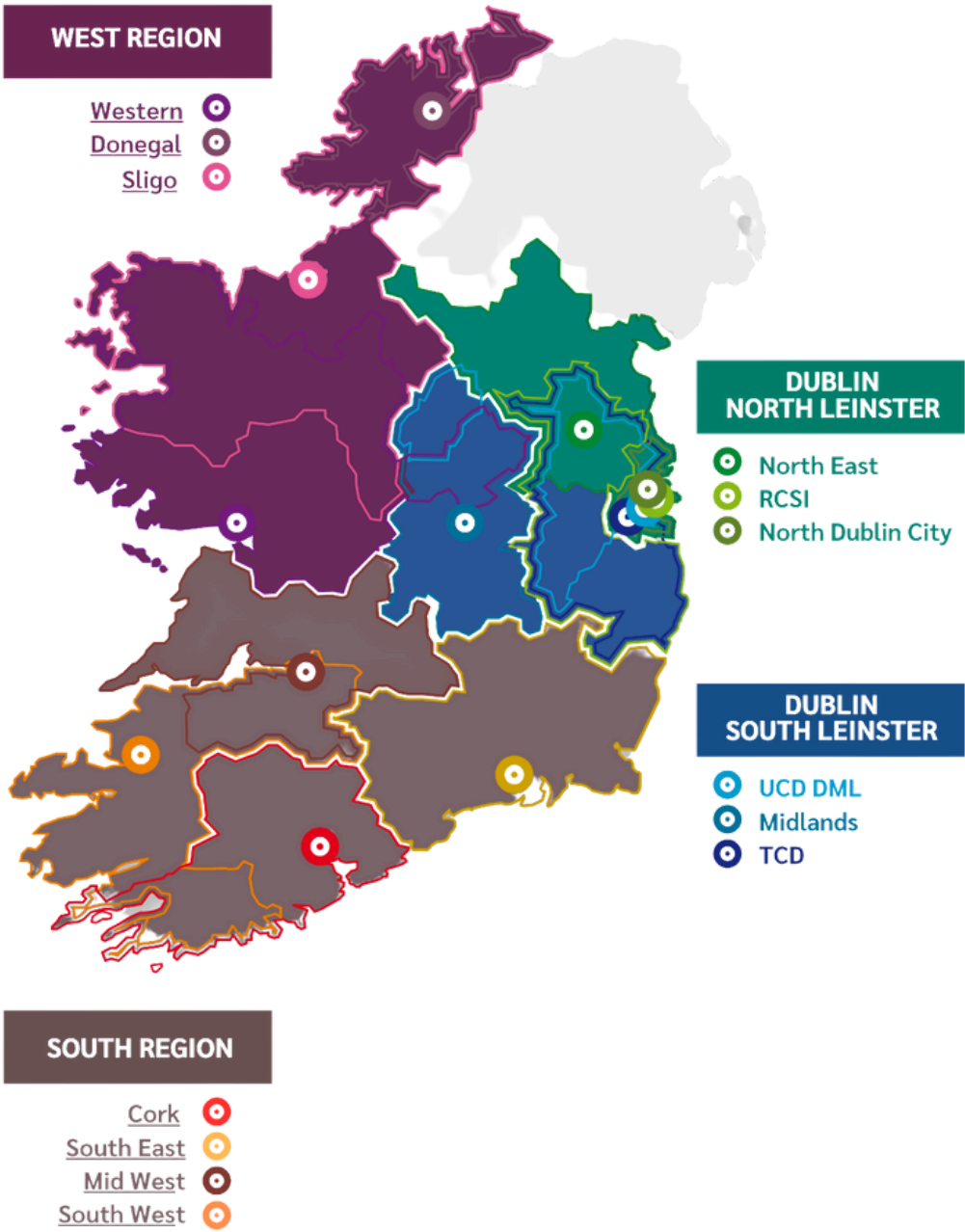


Section 7: Scheme Selection

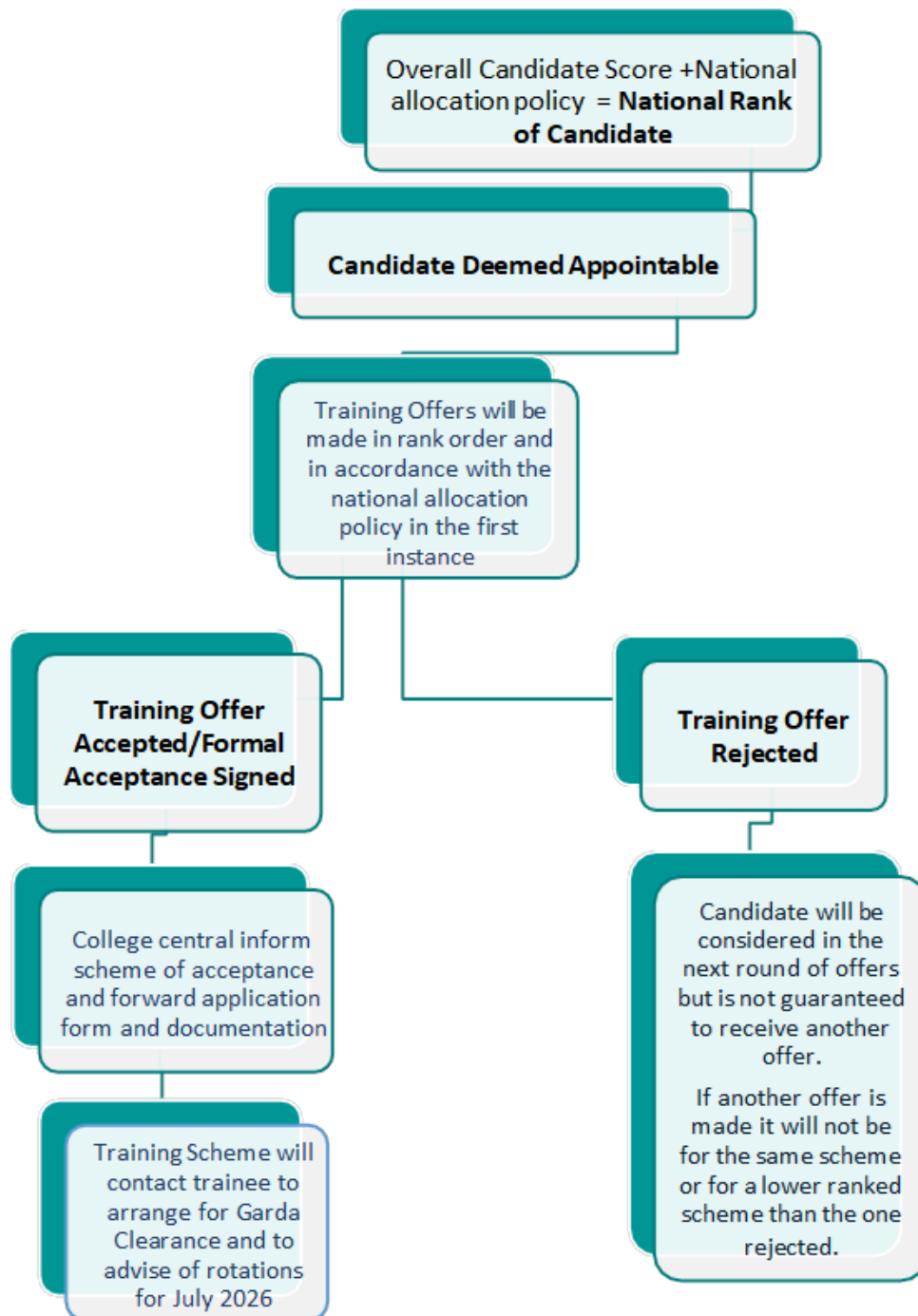
Candidates deemed appointable at interview will be invited to make their scheme selection and can select all thirteen schemes but are asked to select only schemes that they are genuinely interested in and would accept, if an offer was made.

The map outlines the day release locations for each of the schemes across the country.

Paired applications are being offered to pairs of candidates that would like their applications linked at offers stage.



Section 8: Offers Process



- No deferrals to training places are permitted by the Health Service Executive.
- Training place swaps are not permitted.
- If candidates are tied across all scores and scheme selection, a random process for making offers to these candidates will be introduced.
- Offers will not be issued after Friday, 01 May 2026.
- Paired applicants are required to comply with the [terms and conditions](#) of pairing.

Section 9: Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL)

[Recognition of Prior Learning](#) is open to applicants that will have certification of completion of BST training in Medicine, Emergency Medicine or Paediatrics and have passed the appropriate examination.

The RPL requirements for each category are as follows:

RPL MEDICINE

- Hold a Certificate of Completion of Core Specialist Training (CSCST) in Basic Specialist Training in Medicine with the Royal College of Physician of Ireland (RCPI) and
- Complete all appropriate assessments (MRCPI Examinations Part I & Part II - Written & Clinical by Thursday, 30 April 2026).

RPL EMERGENCY MEDICINE

- Hold a CSCST in Emergency Medicine with the Royal College of Surgeons and
- Complete all appropriate assessments (MRCEM Primary, MRCEM Intermediate SBA and MRCEM OSCE by Thursday, 30 April 2026.)

RPL Paediatrics

- Hold a CSCST in Basic Specialist Training in Paediatrics with the Royal College of Physician Ireland (RCPI) and
- Complete all appropriate assessments (MRCPI Examinations)

Part I & Part II - Written & Clinical by Thursday, 30 April 2026

- BST trainees currently in year 2 of training can apply for RPL but must submit all required examination results by Thursday, 30 April 2026.
- RPL application does not automatically confer eligibility for a right to either RPL or a place on a GP Training Programme.
- RPL offers will be made based on training scheme's availability to accommodate RPL and on candidate rank.
- All RPL decisions are final and are not open to appeal.

Section 10: Key Dates

2025

Monday, 08 September	Application (Part A) - registration for SJT/CPST <u>OPEN</u>
Thursday, 02 October	Application & Information Webinar 7pm
Monday, 13 October	Application (Part A) - registration for SJT/CPST <u>CLOSE</u> (10am)
Wednesday, 22 October	SJT & CPST Test
Friday, 07 November	Notification to applicants of SJT & CPST outcome Applicants that meet the standard required in both tests will be required to complete Application (Part B)
Friday, 07 November	Application (Part B) Open
Monday, 24 November	Application (Part B) <u>Close</u>
Monday, 15 December	Notification to applicants of eligibility review
Monday, 15 December	Applicants that meet the eligibility criteria will be required to provide details of two referees, upload completed references and consent to the interview process.

2026

Monday, 05 January	Closing date for provision of references
Tuesday 10, Wednesday 11, & Thursday 12 February	Interviews: Simulated Patient (online)
Friday, 20 – Monday, 23 February	Scheme preference selection
Thursday, 26 February	First round offers (further rounds of offers will be made until all places are filled)
Friday, 10 July	GP training induction session
Sunday, 12 July	GP training commences

Section 13: Helpful Tips

- Review all information on [GP Trainee Recruitment](#)
- Talk to current/recently graduated trainees and review the real-life stories on [Be a GP](#)
- Attend the ICGP Application & Information Webinar on Thursday, 2 October @7pm.
- Check that you have included all relevant documents before submitting your application
- Do not leave it until the last minute to complete/submit your application

Please contact [GP Training](#) if you have any queries following review of information available.